



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Deputy Secretary

February 9, 2010

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chairman
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Re: Letter of Support, HB 181 – Department of Health and Mental Hygiene – Biomonitoring Program - Report

Dear Chairman Hammen and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed House Bill 181, entitled *Department of Health and Mental Hygiene – Biomonitoring Program - Report*, and we would like to offer our support for the bill's concept.

The Department embraces the concept of biomonitoring as a program that will increase and improve our understanding of the exposure of Maryland citizens to various environmental contaminants and the concentration of those contaminants in people. Should this legislation be enacted, and should the study indicate that such a program was feasible, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene would be in a good position further develop the program concept in a way that would provide for empirical evidence of exposure and position Maryland health and environmental agencies to target the issues most likely to damage health or the environment. MDE's Science Services Administration is willing to assist the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as necessary to fulfill the legislation's requirements.

Thank you for your consideration. We will continue to monitor House Bill 181 during the Committee's deliberations, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 410-537-3812 or by e-mail at lnissley@mde.state.md.us if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Lisa Nissley
Legislative Liaison

cc: The Honorable James W. Hubbard
Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Richard Eskin, Director of Science Services Administration
Heather Barthel, Director of Legislation and Policy
Clifford Mitchell, MD, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene